



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **MEASLES CASE REPORTED ON MAY 27 SAN DIEGO BOUND FLIGHT** *HHSA Investigating Public Exposure*

Passengers on a recent flight from Chicago to San Diego are warned about exposure to measles on a San Diego bound flight, the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) reports. A passenger on the May 27 United Airlines flight # 0521 was confirmed today to have the highly contagious disease. Local exposures to measles may have also occurred in San Diego International Airport Terminal One and on an Avis rental car shuttle between 2:45 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. on May 27.

The ill passenger is a 43 year old Italian citizen who had never been immunized for measles. He began to have symptoms on May 23 and traveled from Brussels, Belgium to Rochester, New York through New York City on May 25. The man then flew from Rochester to Chicago before boarding the United Airlines flight to San Diego on May 27, landing at 2:41 p.m. The following day, May 28, he was seen at ASAP Urgent Care in Encinitas where staff took appropriate precautions to prevent further exposure and immediately notified local public health officials.

County health officials are contacting 11 passengers with local addresses to inform them of the exposure on the United Airlines flight and to determine if they have been vaccinated. Passengers on the flights with addresses outside of San Diego County are being contacted by other local, state and federal authorities.

"Measles is highly contagious and is easily spread by coughing, sneezing, or coming in close contact with an infected person," said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., County Public Health Officer. "Anyone on the flight or in the airport terminal should watch for symptoms and contact their healthcare provider if they show any signs of the disease."

Measles develops seven to 18 days after exposure. Early symptoms include cough, runny nose, fever, and red eyes with a distinctive red rash appearing in one to four days. A person is considered contagious four days before and four days after the rash appears. The rash begins on the face and head then continues downward and outward to the hands and feet. It fades in the same order it began, from head to feet.

"The best way to prevent measles is by getting the measles vaccine," said Wooten. "It is important to be up-to-date on vaccinations when traveling to Europe, Asia or Africa where measles outbreaks are occurring. This is the third confirmed measles case in San Diego this year and all were initially exposed overseas."

All persons born after 1956 should have documentation of at least one dose of MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) vaccine or other evidence of immunity to measles. The CDC recommends two doses of the vaccine; the first at 12 months of age, and the second between ages 4 and 6. Travelers age 6 months and older are eligible to receive the MMR vaccination and should be vaccinated before overseas travel.

Complications from measles are more common in children younger than 5 years of age and adults 20 years and older. Complications can include diarrhea, ear infection and pneumonia. Death can occur from severe complications and the risk is higher among younger children and adults. There is no treatment for measles. Bed rest, fluids and control of fever are recommended. Persons with complications may need treatment for their specific problem.

Anyone who is concerned about exposure to measles may contact County officials at (866) 358-2966 or contact their healthcare provider. Any individuals with symptoms of measles should call their medical provider in advance so that infection control measures may be taken to prevent exposure to others.

For more information about measles, other vaccine-preventable diseases and the shots that protect against them please visit [www.sdiz.org](http://www.sdiz.org).

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